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ROUTING FORM  
Doc. No.:

HGG-A-775

Date: 13 April 1954

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TO

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TO : Lincoln

DATE:

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala

INFO: Chief, WDC

SUBJECT: GENERAL-- Operational

SPECIFIC-- Policia de Emigración y Política

Reference: HUL-A-130

( [ ] dispatch )

1. Escconson-2, who has numerous contacts in police circles by reason of [ ] and with army G-2, was questioned with a view to the development of information relating to the inquiry contained in reference. His responses covered some material not specifically requested in reference but it is included in the following paragraphs as of possible interest to you and for record purposes. Considering the fact that Escconson-2 has excellent contacts in police circles, including a sub-agent in the Guardia Judicial, we feel it relatively unimportant at this time to attempt a penetration of the subject unit, especially if [ ] were used to accomplish it. We also have reports indicating that he is a venal opportunist, and is not to be trusted. If used he probably would be overly prone to doubling, [ ]
2. According to Escconson-2, the Policia de Emigración y Política is a relatively new unit consisting of approximately 20 plain clothes members of the Guardia Civil. It was organized by Colonel CRUZ Wer, present head of the Guardia Civil, for two purposes: a) to control the political activities of opposition parties and individuals, and b) to control the activities and residence of foreigners in Guatemala.
3. The first head of the Policia de Emigración y Política was Francisco VILLAGRAN, brother-in-law of CRUZ Wer. However, according to a rumor reported by Escconson-2, personal differences arose between CRUZ Wer and VILLAGRAN and the latter was removed from his position with the subject unit and replaced by Felix SIERRA. VILLAGRAN is presently serving as an inspector in the Guardia Judicial.
4. The Policia de Emigración y Política is not a legal entity in the strictest sense; it was formed by personal order of CRUZ Wer and not by formal legislative act or Presidential order. It functions solely in the capital city, and in the opinion of Escconson-2 is not an efficient unit.

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5. Incidentally, before Esconson-2 was consulted on this matter he had previously reported that a Major Carlos BARRIOS Peña is attempting to organize a new "information service" for CENZ Wer. This unit's objectives will be to investigate and report on the political activities of oppositionists. It will also consist of approximately 20 persons. Assuming that the reported organization is true, Esconson-2 opined that it would replace the older Policía de Emigración y Política.
6. For your information, Esconson-2 stated that frontier police are officially called Delegados de Migración and are employees of the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Customs officials on the frontiers are representatives of the Central Customs in the capital which in turn is responsible to the Minister of Hacienda. According to Esconson-2, the Delegados de Migración and the customs agents control all border traffic at the place of assignment. They are not under the control of the subject unit. Members of the provincial Guardia Civil may also be present at border stations but their responsibilities do not extend to international travel control.
7. Other organizations engage in activities normally following within the description of "political police." The largest such organization is the Guardia Judicial, a plain clothes unit whose activities are confined to the capital city. In the provinces selected members of the Guardia Civil called "rebajadas" perform similar plain clothes duty in connection with political matters. Most provincial governors usually, but not always, maintain a small staff of "confidential agents" for political investigative and control activities.
8. Army G-2 has two investigative-intelligence sections. One is designed to cover the activities of personnel within the army itself; the other is a civilian section that covers the activities of political parties, both pro- and anti-government. Esconson-2 believes that G-2 provides the penetration agents that are sent abroad to join and report on exiled groups.
9. Practically all government departments receive allotments of confidential funds in the annual budget. Such funds are used, at least in part, to support "servicios confidentiales" in each department. In practice, persons so employed collect political information for the responsible minister to enable him to protect himself and successfully jockey into rewarding positions. Very often, according to Esconson-2, contending ministers employ their confidential agents against each other. As a consequence of such intrigues, Esconson-2 observed that the National Palace is frequently referred to as "la cueva de los cuarenta ladrones."
10. As might be expected the President has his personal information service which Esconson-2 declares is headed by Jaime DIAZ Rozzotto.

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It is the function of this service to provide the President with confidential political information on all sectors of the body politic.

11. When asked to estimate the effectiveness of the various intelligence services of the government, Esconson-2 stated that in his judgment they are generally inefficient due to the fact that a "saturation" technique is used to develop information. Excessive numbers of agents are sent out on general assignments such as coverage of "political activities." Seldom are they given specific targets. Consequently, restaurants, parks, and other public places are generally frequented by "orejas" who eavesdrop on conversations in the hope of picking up information that falls within the "political activities" category assigned them. Although this system is inefficient in terms of personnel employed it does keep the government reasonably well-informed as to the thoughts of the man in the street. However, the omnipresence of "orejas" is a well known fact and most people are discreet in their public-political conversations, especially at this time when an expression of opinion could lead to government reprisal against the speaker. As an aside, Esconson-2 pointed out that his activities and those of his sub-agents are constantly endangered by such government informants. An indiscreet question while working on an assigned task could easily make the investigator the investigated.

[ ]  
George L. Tranger.

10 March 1954

GLT/cmb

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